

Northern Tier Interoperable Consortium
May 12, 2005 Board Meeting Minutes

The meeting opens at 0910 hours by Director Dusterhoff.

Board Members in attendance include:

Wayne Dusterhoff, Glacier County
Nora Kennedy, Blackfeet Tribe
John Grainger, Roosevelt County
Vernon Berkley, Valley County
Don Brostrom, Hill County
Tom Miller, Phillips County
Lalon Trang, Daniels County
Glen Huestis, Blaine County
Marc McGill, Lincoln County
Gene Fenton, Confederated Shalish and Kootenie
John Allen, Fort Belknap Tribe
Donna Matoon, Toole County
Curtis Petrik, Sheridan County

The meeting minutes from the April meeting was introduced for approval.

Director Dusterhoff turns the meeting over to PM Mark Adams.

Review of the Project Management Review

- PM Adams reviewed the status report.
- PM Adams reviewed the Technical Team work on the site reviews. They are ongoing and the Team identified some alternate sites that might work better based on information collected from site visits. Work is continuing.
- Scott Action Item – Call Verizon for information about the shelters.
- Frequency Update: A frequency meeting was held in Great Falls with the tech team. Ali from ACD Telecom has identified about 75% of needed frequencies through the FCC. In the next two weeks we will have to begin the licensing process. Frequencies will be an issues for a long period of time. Examples of Lewis and Clark County frequencies process and issues. ACD is in the process of selecting frequency pairs at each proposed site that will work within Motorola parameters and other users at the site.
- We are currently continuing evaluation for contract negotiations with Motorola. Work will become more active very soon.
- Alcatel has some questions about specifics of the existing system in Roosevelt County. That information will be provided to the vendors.
- PM Adams introduces the request for Alcatel for a non-disclosure agreement. Issues like open meeting and the advantages of getting more information was discussed. Merl Watt, Alcatel Corporation, explained the competitive nature of the business and the reasons for non-disclosure agreements. Competitive issues are also involved. This will be addressed by the board later in the meeting.

- PM Adams reviews the GIS mapping of anticipated coverage for the Northern Tier design. A demonstration of the software and information available was made. As an example, the Blackfeet Reservation was chose to display the coverage analysis. As an example, some concerns were expressed and discussed in the Marias Valley.

1015 Hours Break

1030 Hours Meeting Continues

PM Adams distributes the financial update for the consortium. A question was raised by Director Dusterhoff regarding what will happen to the 6.4 equipment once the new system is put in place. Discussion followed. No answers exist at this time. A motion made to by John , Roosevelt County, to direct Scott Bradford to set up a meeting with Lewis and Clark County, Northern Tier and the State of Montana soon to determine how we will manage the master control system, who owns the excess equipment, how that will be managed and related issues. A second was received. No further discussion was offered. The motion passed unanimously. Scott will take the lead on coordinating a meeting, assisted by PM Adams.

PM Adams continues the financial update, reviewing the Motorola, microwave, frequency acquisitions and NEPA requirements. Sheri Lanz reports that ODP funds are only for equipment, and construction is not part of the grant. Therefore, NEPA doesn't apply. It will apply for what ever funding the 'construction' pieces are coming out of.

PM Adams noted that the budget for meetings was getting low, with only about 3 month's travel remaining. Questions about what to do about this. Options were discussed.

Scott Bradford, DOA-PSSB, provides an update on Mt. Aeneas/Forest Service coordination, Canadian Coordination, Air Force Participation, and BIA. Ted Sumners, Mindbank Technical Solutions, provided an overview of their information gathering role

Sheri Lanz, State of Montana DES, provides an overview of the ODP grant requirements and a status of what the consortium has spent. Sheri answered questions about what the requirements are. NEPA is not allowed. Buildings are not allowed. Erected towers are OK as long as no construction/site preparation is included. Sheri also explained the process for distribution of the Law Enforcement 2005 grant, which will be on a competitive basis. There is also some local money available but this is not determined yet. Regional meetings will be done in the near future. Information will be distributed in about two weeks. Sheri reports that Great Falls and Billings will be competing for the COPS grant that will be coming availability - possibility of \$170 million nationwide.

Mark introduced an example of tower purchase on Stonewall Mountain in Lewis and Clark County a turnkey project. It is OK under ODP except for the building. Absolutely no buildings.

Major Chris Perez was asked to update the National Guard project. The funding is OK and in Chris's control, but expires September 30. OK was given to coordinate with the state and Northern Tier. A MOU will be important priority as soon as possible. National Guard can be used for construction and NEPA studies. MOA is a crucial part of coordination with the Northern Tier. Senator Bakus said funding for next year may be a possibility given the priority assigned to military/National Guard projects.

Lunch Break 1205 hours

The meeting resumes at 1315 hours with a quorum present.

Director Dusterhoff calls the meeting to order and introduces the letter submitted to the NTIC Board requesting to be made a full member of the consortium. The letter was read to the board and visitors.

Cindy Mullaney gave a brief description of the request. Pondera County initially started as a member of the Central Montana Consortium but feels the goals of the NTIC form a better fit. This included common goals, a history of working together, and similar desires for interoperable communications.

The Board discusses the issue, including how such an addition might affect the Board. Don Brostrom stated he was in favor of a partnership but not a voting member. Issues of budget and costs are discussed. Broad discussions of issues involving partnerships and issues of joining the consortium were reviewed. Different options were

A motion was made to accept Pondera County as a partner for the current NTIC MOU period and recommend Pondera County as a full member at the time of the new MOU in November 2005 or when approved. John Grainger from Roosevelt County seconded the motion.

Marc McGill asked a question about the technical issues of adding potentially adding many counties along the way. Mark Adams reported the technical issues would be a design and implementation perspective.

After discussion, John Grainger withdrew his second. John Allen seconds the motion.

Some discussion John Allen calls the question. Director Dusterhoff calls for the vote.

Toole – no

Roosevelt – no

Valley Co. – no

Hill – no

Phillips – no

Daniels – no

Glacier – no

Lincoln – no
Blaine – no
Sheridan -no
Blackfeet – yes
Fort Belknap – yes
Liberty – yes
Flathead – no

Three votes for – Eleven against. The motion fails.

Cindy thanks the consortium for their consideration. Several members state this can be readdressed with a MOU later for next year.

John Allen brings to the attention of the Board that Ft. Belknap Agency does not have 95% coverage. He reports BIA may put a repeater in Ft. Belknap. Mindbank explained that BIA has some localized solutions. PM Adams reviews this on the GIS system. Warren with Priority Communications says the addition height possible on Cherry Hill may take care of this.

Break at 1450 hours.

Begin at 1508 hours

PM Mark Adams begins discussion on Frequency Licensing. Option and issues. Scott Bradford and Mark Adams

A motion by John Grainger is made that all new frequencies obtained be licensed by the State of Montana Public Safety Services Bureau for the purpose of being utilized for the interoperable radio project in the Northern Tier. Vernon Buerkle seconded. No discussion and the motion was called.

Toole -No
Roosevelt – yes
Hill – yes
Phillips – yes
Blaine – yes
Daniels – yes
Lincoln – yes
Flathead – yes
Sheridan – yes
Glacier - yes
Ft. Belknap – no
Valley - yes
Ten yes and two no.

The motion passed. PSSB will develop a MOU to present to the Board based on the State mutual aid frequency agreement.

Discussion about existing frequencies already in existence that might be used. A MOU will have to be drafted for use of these frequencies. Ownership would remain with the local jurisdictions with mutual use dictated by the MOU.

No remaining Old Business

New Business

Microwave RFP: PM Mark Adams seeks permission for the Tech. Team to develop the RFP and distribute it. This idea was moved and seconded. No discussion and the question was called. This passed unanimously. Scott Bradford and Mark Adams will draft the MOU and present it to Cindy Peterson, Hill County Attorney, prior to the June meeting.

Alcatel non-disclosure agreement: Motion made by Glen Huestis, seconded by Gene Fenton, to sign the non-disclosure agreement. Discussion focused on the applicability of open meeting laws and the necessity to keep things confidential. The question was called and was passed unanimously.

Next meeting Thursday June 2 – Technical Team on June 1.

Blaine County will provide the secretary for the next meeting.

Mark Gruener brought up the issue of understanding the criteria of letting other counties into the consortium. Mark shared the frustration of other counties with the process, both with the SIEC process and joining the consortium. Several are frustrated with the path of the Central Consortium and being part of a consortium is important for grant reasons. The Board and Scott emphasized wanting to work together with the other counties. The process will be on the agenda in June to look forward to defining future relationships.

1700 Move to adjourn – Motion passed.